

of the visiting staff, who saw the matter in a very different light, and offered to teach her himself, which he did; and how probationers' pockets bulged with "Fenwick's Guide" and "Hoblyns," and how these earnest girls compared notes in bed at night, each one having to report to her colleagues what she had learned during the day.

It was the personal experience of the dangers of ignorance, and the need for systematic instruction that inspired the movement for State Registration; and when, in 1904, Mrs. Fenwick, with others, drafted the First Nurses' Registration Bill, they took good care to provide that probationers should be required to undergo a prescribed training in an approved hospital as a condition of admission to the Register; and in the Act under which they were registered, Section 3 (2) (a) and (b), provided that under this section the Rules *shall* contain provisions:—

(a) Requiring as a condition of admission of any person to the Register that that person *shall* have undergone the prescribed training, and *shall* possess the prescribed experience, in the nursing of the sick; and

(b) Requiring that the prescribed training shall be carried out either in an institution approved by the Council in that behalf or in the service of the Admiralty, and Army Council, or the Air Council.

Mrs. Fenwick said she focussed her mind on these Sections of the Act—when a member of the First General Nursing Council. She proposed the establishment of the Education and Examination Committee, with the Matron of St. Thomas' Hospital in the chair. This Committee met weekly and drafted an excellent Syllabus of Training—modelled on that in use at St. Thomas', and the Nursing Schools were informed of its scope—to which apparently there was very little opposition; indeed, a good deal of enthusiastic co-operation was forthcoming, and all would have been well had the Council realised its responsibility to the nurses in training, and not weakly betrayed them at the dictation of ignorant employers.

The first Council did not realise that the compulsory Syllabus of Training had to be incorporated in the Rules, but as soon as this was pointed out by the Minister of Health means were taken to draft the Rules. Registered Nurses were entitled to know, said Mrs. Fenwick, what steps have been taken to obtain their right to a prescribed training under the Act, persistently denied to them by the new Council and Ministry, and she presented the following summary of proceedings which had taken place in the Council:—

Summary of Demand for the Syllabus of Training.

1920-1921.—Education Committee sat weekly and drafted the Syllabus of Training, and Nursing Schools were informed that it was available.

At first it was not realised that the "prescribed" Syllabus of Training came under the Rules and required the consent of the Minister of Health; but in 1921 the Minister intimated to the Council that this was so, and that the Rules must be approved and signed by him, and be submitted to Parliament in due course. The Council conformed to this instruction, and sent forward the Syllabus of Training for signature.

In October, 1921, Mr. L. G. Brock wrote from the Minister "As regards the Syllabus of Training adopted by the Council, the Minister (Sir Alfred Mond), notes that this will be incorporated in the Rules which will be submitted in due course for his sanction."

In November, 1921, Mr. Brock wrote: "With regard to the Syllabus of Training and the Draft Rule relating to it, which was also enclosed in your letter under 'Reply,' I am to state that the Syllabus is now under consideration; but in view of the difficulty of appreciating its precise effect,

apart from the other Rules governing the admission of future nurses, and, in particular, the Rules relating to examinations, and any Rules which may be made for the affiliation of the smaller hospitals to larger centres for purposes of training the Minister proposes to defer giving any definite decision until the whole body of the Rules are before him."

Thus the Rule *re* training was held up for a whole year, presumably by influence of employers at the Ministry of Health.

This was apparent in the Education Committee which began to wobble on the demand for a Syllabus of "prescribed" training.

In September, 1922, the Committee recommended to the Council "that it is thought sufficient for the present to issue this Syllabus of Subjects for Examination with the Nurses' Chart attached as a guide to training," and the Council laid down the regulation "that a Nurse presenting herself for Examination may be questioned on any of the subjects contained in this Syllabus."

Thus a nurse was to be examined on subjects without being taught on "prescribed" teaching.

A letter received from the Ministry on this important matter was reported, and withheld from the Council. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick asked for a copy. On October 6th, 1922, the new Chairman of Council, Sir Wilmot Herringham, informed a Deputation from the Association of Poor Law Unions (which had asked the Minister *not* to sanction the Syllabus of Training) that the Syllabus "was nothing but a model for the help of the Training Schools. No nurse would be asked whether she had been trained in the Syllabus or not. It was a mere model."

This egregiously ignorant statement was made by Sir Wilmot Herringham without consulting the Council. Presumably he had never read the Nurses' Registration Act—which in Section 3 (2) (a) and (b) provides for a compulsory scheme of training.

At the next meeting of the Council, on October 27th, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick moved, in accordance with notice:—

"That the Minister of Health be requested to inform the General Nursing Council what modifications, if any, he considers advisable in the Syllabus unanimously approved by the Council, for the future training of nurses in general nursing, so that it may be approved by him, and thus a standardised system be substituted for the present chaotic conditions of nursing education."

Miss Lloyd Still, Chairman of Education Committee, said that it was understood the Minister was not prepared to give his sanction to the Syllabus of Training. It was desired to postpone it, as a temporary measure.

In the meanwhile nurses in training were deprived of their right to a prescribed scheme of training.

On December 15th, the Minister, Sir Alfred Mond, wrote to the Council condoning Sir Wilmot Herringham's illogical and illegal pronouncement, and said, "there is no longer any necessity to incorporate the Syllabus in the Rules made under the Act, and it consequently does not require the Minister's approval," and pointing out "that the preface to the Syllabus, as it stands at present, is calculated to convey a contrary impression, and the Minister would, therefore, suggest that in circulating these documents it is desirable that the preface should be revised, so as to make it perfectly clear that the Syllabus is advisory only and not obligatory."

The letter then advises the Council how it can evade the Law in the following paragraph:—

"I am, however, to point out that Section 3 (2) (a) and (b) of the Act refer specifically to the 'prescribed' training, and it will, therefore, be necessary for the Council to submit a rule prescribing in general terms the training which candidates for examination will be required to have.

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